

APPENDIX

1. (previously presented) An apparatus for extracting information desired by a user from a source, the apparatus comprising:

an input module to acquire text from a user;

a filtering module programmed to determine a micro-context relevant to the text;

the filtering module further programmed to locate information corresponding to the micro-context in a database; and

a presentation module to receive the information and present the information to a user.

2. (original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the micro-context is independent of a hierarchical ordering of the database.

3. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the filtering module comprises a context construction module to combine words in the text to form the micro-context, the micro-context further being characteristic of the information.

4. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the filtering module further comprises a context comparison module to acquire a macro-context relevant to the micro-context.

5. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the filtering module further comprises an information matching module to locate information corresponding to the macro-context in the database, the database being contextually indexed for searching by context.

6. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the presentation module is programmed to selectively present the information in a format designated by a user.

7. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 5, further comprising a mining module to add new data to the database by selectively retrieving the new data from the source.

8. (original) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the mining module retrieves data from the source over a network.

9. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the mining module is located substantially remotely from the source.

10. (original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the network is the Internet.

11. (original) The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the information includes data about products purchasable by a user over the Internet.

12. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 5, further comprising an updating module to update the information periodically.

13. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the database further comprises a subset to store information for future access by a user.

14. (previously presented) An apparatus for extracting information desired by a user from a source, the apparatus comprising:

an input module to acquire text from a user;

a filtering module programmed to determine a micro-context relevant to the text;

the filtering module further programmed to locate information corresponding to the micro-context in a database, the filtering module comprising:

a context construction module to combine words in the text to form the micro-context characteristic of the information;

a context comparison module to determine a macro-context relevant to the micro-context; and

an information matching module to locate information corresponding to the macro-context in the database, the database being contextually indexed for searching by context; and

a presentation module to receive the information and present the information to a user.

15. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the presentation module is programmed to present the information in a format designated by a user.

16. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising a mining module to independently add new data to the database by selectively retrieving new data from the source.

17. (previously presented) A method for extracting information desired by a user from a source, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving text from a user;

determining a micro-context corresponding to the text;

determining a macro-context corresponding to the micro-context;

locating information corresponding to the macro-context in a database; and

presenting the information to a user.

18. (previously presented) The method of claim 17, further comprising combining relevant words in the text to form the micro-context characteristic of the information.

19. (previously presented) The method of claim 18, wherein locating further comprises searching through indices in the database, wherein the indices have a format similar to the macro-context, and returning information linked to indices which correlate to the macro-contexts.

20. (previously presented) The method of claim 19, wherein presenting further comprises presenting the information in a format designated by a user.

21. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, further comprising selectively retrieving data from the source over a network to add to the database.

22. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising updating the information periodically.

23. (previously presented) An apparatus for extracting information desired by a user from a source, the apparatus comprising:

an input module to receive textual input from a user;

a filtering module to receive the textual input from the input module and to filter the textual input to determine a micro-context relevant to the textual input, wherein the micro-context refers to assembling words of the textual input to form small, coherent groups to determine the meaning of the textual input, and wherein micro-context further comprises determining at least one of characteristics of the user submitting the textual input, and characteristics of prior searches conducted by the user submitting the textual input;

the filtering module further programmed to locate information corresponding to the micro-context in a database; and

a presentation module to receive the information and present the information to the user.

24. (previously presented) An apparatus for extracting information desired by a user from a source, the apparatus comprising:

an input module to receive textual input from a user;

a filtering module to receive the textual input from the input module and to filter the textual input to determine a micro-context relevant to the textual input, wherein the micro-context refers to assembling words of the textual input to form small, coherent groups to determine the meaning of the textual input by determining the context that would exist and be understood if inputs were spoken by the user under the circumstances, and wherein micro-context further comprises determining at least one of characteristics of the user submitting the textual input, and characteristics of prior searches conducted by the user submitting the textual input;

the filtering module further programmed to locate information corresponding to the micro-context in a database, the filtering module comprising:

a context construction module to combine words in the text to form the micro-context characteristic of the information;

a context comparison module to determine a macro-context relevant to the micro-context, wherein the macro-context contains substantially the entire text of web pages provided by more than one separately independent entities.

an information matching module to locate information corresponding to the macro-context in the database, the database being contextually indexed for searching by context; and

a presentation module to receive the information and present the information to the user.